

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SAM-01 SAJ-01 OMB-01 ACDA-05 /077 W

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R 221225Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4049

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USNATO

USMISSION USEC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 8948

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, SP

SUBJ: GOVT GESTURES TOWARDS SOCIALISTS

SUMMARY: IN THE PAST WEEK THE GOS HAS TAKEN SEVERAL ACTIONS
WHICH HAVE THE EFFECT OF OPENING A DISCREET DIALOGUE WITH THE
VARIOUS SOCIALIST GROUPS WHICH HAVE HERETOFORE OPERATED

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OUTSIDE THE LAW. EVEN IF THE GOS BEGINS TO SHOW SIGNS OF A

LESS REPRESSIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS SOCIALISTS, THE LATTER STILL HAVE TO OVERCOME THE ENDEMIC PROBLEM OF FRAGMENTATION AMONG SOCIALIST FACTIONS. END SUMMARY

1. DURING ITS FIRST WEEK IN OFFICE THE NEW GOVT HAS TAKEN THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS WITH RESPECT TO ACTIVITIES OF VARIOUS SOCIALIST GROUPINGS:

(A) MINISTER OF INTERIOR FRAGA DINED WITH POPULAR SOCIALIST PARTY (PSP) LEADER, TIerno GALVAN, WHO SUBSEQUENTLY MADE A PUBLIC STATEMENT NOTING THAT GOVT PROGRAM OUTLINE HAD SOME POSITIVE ELEMENTS;

(B) RETURNED PASSPORT TO FELIPE GONZALEZ, LEADER OF THE SPANISH SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY (PSOE) ACCREDITED WITH THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL; THE PSOE ISSUED A STATEMENT DEC 16 WHICH, WHILE SAYING THAT GOVT PROGRAM ANNOUNCED THE PREVIOUS DAY LACKED PRECISION, ACKNOWLEDGED THAT ITS TERMINOLOGY WAS AT LEAST IN TUNE WITH PRESENT-DAY NEEDS;

(C) REHABILITATED RODOLFO LLOPIS, FORMER LEADER OF THE PSOE LIVING IN EXILE IN FRANCE, BY WIPING HIS JUDICIAL RECORD CLEAN AND GRANTING HIM A PENSION CALCULATED ON THE BASIS OF HIS YEARS IN EXILE INCLUSIVE .

2. THE PSOE EXILE GROUP ORIGINALLY LED BY LLOPIS, WHO WAS FORCED FROM THE PARTY'S LEADERSHIP IN 1972, ISSUED A STATEMENT IN MADRID DEC 17, 1975, SAYING THAT IT WAS RETURNING TO SPAIN AND COMING INTO THE OPEN UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF ALFONSO FERNANDEZ TORRES. THE PARTY'S SECRETARY FOR PRESS AND PROPAGANDA TOLD AN EMBOFF THAT THEIR GROUP REPRESENTED THE TRADITIONAL RIGHT WING OF THE PSOE ORIGINALLY LED BY BESTEIRO AND DIFFERED FROM THE GONZALEZ-LED PSOE IN THEIR OBJECTION TO THE PARTICIPATION OF "TOTALITARIAN" PARTIES, I.E., THE PCE, IN THE GENUINE "PLURALISTIC DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM" WHICH THEY ADVOCATED FOR SPAIN. THIS OFFICIAL ALSO UNDERSCORED THE FERNANDEZ-LED PSOE'S COMMITMENT TO A GRADUAL DEMOCRATICATION PROCESS WHICH WOULD NOT UNSETTLE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PAST FORTY YEARS IN SPAIN. HE SAID THAT LLOPIS WOULD RETURN TO SPAIN IN JANUARY TO ACT AS THE HONORARY LEADER OF THE PARTY.

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3. THREE DAYS FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH FRAGA, TIerno GALVAN ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION OF A SOCIALIST CONFEDERATION OF THE SPANISH STATE GROUPING EIGHT SEPARATE FACTIONS (INCLUDING TIerno'S PSP AND OTHER REGIONAL SOCIALIST PARTIES FOR THE MOST PART). HERETOFORE, THE PSP HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE PCE-DOMINATED "JUNTA DEMOCRATICA." TEN DAYS AGO, ONE OF TIerno'S CLOSEST COLLABORATORS TOLD AN EMBOFF THAT THE PARTY WAS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING PULLING OUT OF THE "JUNTA". FRAGA'S FRIENDLY GESTURE

TOWARDS TIERNO MAY HAVE BEEN CALCULATED TO ENCOURAGE SUCH A SWITCH, PERHAPS WITH THE INDUCEMENT THAT THERE MIGHT BE A PLACE FOR A STRONG SOCIALIST PARTY IN A DEMOCRATIC SPAIN.

4. ANTONIO GARCIA LOPEZ, LEADER OF THE SPANISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PSDE), MADE KNOWN DEC 17 HIS INTENTION TO DISCUSS HIS PARTY'S PROSPECTS WITH LEADERS OF THE NEW GOVT. FOLLOWING THE DEATH SEVERAL MONTHS AGO OF THE PSDE'S TRADITIONAL LEADER, DIONISIO RIDRUEJO, THE PARTY HAS SPLIT INTO TWO FACTIONS WITH THE PREDOMINANT ONE BEING LED BY GARCIA LOPEZ WHO IS KNOWN TO HAVE GOOD CONTACTS WITH SOME MILITARY OFFICERS AND IN THE CIVILIAN ESTABLISHMENT.

5. COMMENT: GONZALEZ AND HIS SO-CALLED "YOUNG TURK" FOLLOWERS SEIZED CONTROL FROM THE EXILE-DOMINATED PSOE IN 1972 AND SUCCEEDED IN OBTAINING ACCEPTANCE BY THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL. HERETOFORE, THE GOS HAS MAINTAINED A HARD LINE TOWARDS BOTH FACTIONS WHICH COULD NOT OPERATE OPENLY IN SPAIN. THE NEW GOVT, HOWEVER, SEEMS WILLING TO ALLOW SOCIALISTS TO TRAVEL AND MAINTAIN CONTACTS ABROAD AND TO ALLOW SOME POLITICAL EXILES TO RETURN IN FULL KNOWLEDGE THAT THEY WILL ENGAGE IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY.

6. MANY POLITICIANS IN THE ESTABLISHMENT, INCLUDING SOME MEMBERS OF THE NEW GOVT, BELIEVE RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY, THAT A VIABLE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM IN SPAIN CANNOT FUNCTION WITHOUT A STRONG SOCIALIST PARTY WITH GENUINE DEMOCRATIC CREDENTIALS AS A LEFT ALTERNATIVE TO THE COMMUNISTS. THE PAST WEEK'S DEVELOPMENTS INDICATE THAT THE GOVT AND THE VARIOUS SOCIALIST FACTIONS ARE TESTING THE TERRAIN FOR ESTABLISHING A VIABLE DIALOGUE. OVERCOMING GOVT REPRESSION IS NOT THE ONLY SOCIALIST PROBLEM, HOWEVER. PERHAPS A BIGGER PROBLEM IS THE FRAGMENTATION AMONG THE SOCIALISTS THEMSELVES. THE ABSENCE OF UNITY HAS MADE THE SOCIALISTS AN EASY PREY FOR COMMUNIST INDUCEMENTS AT
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COLLABORATION, E.G., "JUNTA DEMOCRATICA", AND GOVT DECISIVE TACTICS. IT LOOMS AS THE MAIN OBSTACLE TO THE EMERGENCE OF A STRONG SOCIALIST PARTY.
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